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HD **B.C. NDP government under fire for environmental record from New Democratic federal election candidate**

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NDP candidate Anjali Appadurai has criticized Premier John Horgan and his government for a 'moral failure' in dealing with climate change

New Democrats are relying on a harsh critic of the B.C. NDP government's environmental record to win a high-profile Vancouver seat in the federal election.

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Anjali Appadurai, the NDP candidate in the Vancouver-Granville riding, had criticized Premier John Horgan and his government months ago for a "moral failure" in dealing with climate change.

On another occasion, Ms. Appadurai, who is on leave from her job as a climate justice campaigner for Sierra Club BC, tweeted "Shame on you @jjhorgan," over a photo of a massive tree reportedly removed from an old-growth forest.

On Thursday, Mr. Horgan's communications director, Sage Aaron, said in an e-mail that the province does not provide comment on remarks made by candidates or parties in the federal election campaign.

Four leaders to square off in first televised debate of federal election campaign tonight

Vancouver-Granville was first contested in 2015. Jody Wilson-Raybould won then and was re-elected as an Independent in 2019 after a falling out with the Liberal government over the SNC-Lavalin scandal.

The former federal justice minister recently announced that she would not run again. In 2019, the NDP came fourth in the riding behind Ms. Wilson-Raybould and the Liberal and Conservative candidates.

Political scientist Gerald Baier of the University of British Columbia said the issue reflects an inevitable schism between the federal and provincial wings of the NDP, and between factions within the NDP movement

"When the NDP is in government, they tend to face a bit of criticism from the left, the farther left, even though they are the farthest left of the mainstream parties, because governing requires some degree of compromise," Mr. Baier said an interview.

Some areas of British Columbia are expected to be particularly competitive in the federal election campaign. There are 42 seats in the province. At dissolution of Parliament, the Conservatives had 17 seats, the Liberals and NDP each had 11 seats. The Green Party had two seats. There was one Independent, namely Ms. Wilson-Raybould.

Ms. Appadurai wrote in May that countering climate change will require true political leadership.

"But from continued investment in dangerous fossil-fuel projects to clearcutting old-growth, the B.C. government is sending a clear signal that it still prioritizes short-term industry profits over a climate-safe future," she wrote, with co-author Jens Wieting, in The Province newspaper in Vancouver.

"The moral failure must end now, because British Columbians have consistently shown that we want to be part of the global community that cares about leaving a better world for future generations."

In a statement on Thursday, Ms. Appadurai said she said she is running for the NDP because it's the only party that is tackling the "climate emergency" with a strong public investment approach to build a social safety net and address the inequality that is caused and exacerbated by the climate crisis.

"My position is a principled one that is aligned with the party while staying dedicated to pushing for stronger climate action at all levels of government."

In Montreal, federal NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh would not say whether he shares Ms. Appadurai's views about Mr. Horgan, who became Premier in 2017.

Instead, he criticized the federal record on climate change, and said the NDP would do more to help Indigenous communities save old-growth forests.

Mr. Singh also declined to say if he supports the B.C. NDP government's approach to the issue of logging protests over harvesting old-growth forests in Fairy Creek.

Instead, he denounced RCMP "violence" dealing with protesters, and cited his calls for reforms on the use of force by the Mounties.

"I have been able to spend time in these majestic old-growth forests, and I want to protect them."

Mr. Horgan previously promised to protect intact temperate forests. In June, the NDP government suspended old-growth logging in the Fairy Creek watershed and a nearby area at the request of local Indigenous communities.

The action came after months of civil disobedience by protesters, who declared they were protecting a rare, ancient rain forest. That protest has continued.

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